

Abraham Lincoln before 1860

Crossing the Wabash River to Illinois

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection



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<http://archive.org/details/abrahamlincolnbe00smit>

Person Paper Co.
Springfield
Ohio

Wm. H. Lawrence Co.
No. 17th St. Bldg.

Dear Cousin

It is so long

Since I received a letter from you that I
am anxious to hear from you. I have been very
closely engaged since my return and have given
but little time to the land business or to my so-
cial correspondences. I have since the first of
April sowed in 100 acres of my prairie and
have broken and put in corn about 100 acres - the
corn looks very fine and if the season should
continue as favorable as it has been thus far - I
will have an immense crop. I never saw corn
look better.

I attended our State Convention on the 9th
day at which we nominated our State of-
ficers - there were about 600 delegates and
I can truly say I never in life saw congregated
together so many noble intelligent looking men.
But "Wm. H. Lawrence" was there a head and
shoulder above the rest the noblest Roman

of them all - the observed of all observers - simple
and unaffected in manners - sociable and easy access
to the humblest of his fellow Citizens. I had
the honor of an introduction to Lincoln by my
friend Mr. C. Dubois Auditor of State who
is from our County. Lincoln gave me a very con-
dial greeting and entered into conversation as an
old friend and acquaintance. After conversing awhile
said I to him Lincoln there is a rumor in cir-
culation in our region about you and I want you
to tell me all about it - Well said he what is it?
About 30 years ^{ago} rumor says Abraham Lincoln was
seen walking bare foot driving a ~~ox~~ team with an
ox wagon moving a family through our town of
Vannestville - is that true? - in past days Lincoln
About 30 years ^{ago} I did drive my father's ox wagon
and team moving my father's family through your town
of Vannestville and I was afoot but not bare-
foot. In my young days I frequently went barefooted
but on that occasion I had on a substantial pair
of shoes - it was a cold day in March and I never
went barefooted in cold weather. I will remember ^{that} ~~the~~
trip thro' your County as long as I live. I crossed the
Mississippi at Vincennes and in the river being high
the road on the low prairie was covered with water
a half mile at a stretch and the water covered

with ice - the only means by which I could keep the
road was by observing the stakes on each side ^{heads} as guide
When the water is over the road - When I came to
the water I put a favorite fiat dog I had along into
the wagon and got in myself and whipped up my
team and started into the water to pick my way across
as well as I could - after breaking the ice and wading
about $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile my little dog jumped out of
the wagon and the ice being thin he broke through and
was struggling for life. I could not bear to lose my
dog and I jumped out of the wagon and waded
right back in the ice and water got back of him and
helped him out and saved him.

Lincoln is a man of the people who by patient toil
and perseverance from the humblest walks of life to
be considered second to no man in our great Republic

His nomination is greeted with enthusiastic shouts
and joyful demonstrations by all the friends of
freedom over our prairie State - We have good
reasons to believe that Egypt will be redeemed
Lincoln will get a vastly increased vote over the
vote given to Fremont. As an example our County
of Cassia gave Fremont 80 votes only out of
a vote of 1000 - At our next fall election we
expect to cast about 1700 and from the reports
of a secret investigation lately made we expect to

carry the County for Lincoln - this is over a
thousand per cent gain - Many other Counties
lost of larger gains than this - in some Coun-
ties in Egypt there were but 2 or 3 Republican
votes given in BC and they now expect to carry
the Counties for Lincoln.

I have not forgotten the promise you made
us when you were here that you would see it
some time during the Presidential campaign
make us some stump speeches - Now we hope to see
you here before long. Come and bring your card.
Bring also with you some of those land buyers -
This is a good time to show land because the
crops look very fine and flourishing and it
is a good time to buy land because there are
many very fine bargains - Bill Gordon and Ed
are here - Bill is supporting himself at the inn
and Ed is selling rail ties - There are more - our
family are well - give our respects to your
your mother and all the friends.

Wm. C. C. C.
Peter & mother

LAW OFFICES
KEIFER & KEIFER
FAHIEN-TEHAN BUILDING
SPRINGFIELD, OHIO

WM. W. KEIFER
HORACE S. KEIFER

February 19, 1938

Mr. Louis A. Warren, Director,
Lincoln National Life Foundation,
Fort Wayne, Ind.

Dear Sir:

I have found a letter amongst my father's papers from Peter Smith, dated July 17, 1860, which gives a Lincoln anecdote that is new to me. Having been related at that time makes it more interesting than if given at a later date when Lincoln was a famous character. I enclose a copy of same to you herewith. Perhaps I should send the original to you where it will be preserved more carefully than most places.

Yours very truly,



WWK/EH

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February 23, 1938

Mr. William W. Keifer
Fahien-Tehan Building
Springfield, Ohio

My dear Mr. Keifer:

I wish to acknowledge your letter of February 19
to Dr. Warren in which you enclosed a very interesting
copy of a letter of your father's written to him by
Peter Smith on July 17, 1860. It is a very interesting
letter.

Your letter with the enclosure will be held
until Dr. Warren returns to Fort Wayne in April.

Yours very truly,

MAC:EB
M.A. Cook

Librarian

March 22, 1938

Mr. William Keifer
Fahien-Teham Building
Springfield, Ohio

My dear Mr. Keifer:

After an absence of about three months I am back at my desk again and find your very interesting letter of February 19 awaiting me.

May I thank you especially for the excerpt of the letter wrote to J. Warren Keifer by Peter Smith on July 17, 1860.

The reminiscence is so interesting that I feel as if I would like to use this in Lincoln Lore, at least a portion of it, and I am wondering if you would feel like loaning the letter to me in order that I might have it photographed, and I would like to have a plate made of a certain section of it in facsimile, as I think it would be much more attractive to the readers of Lincoln Lore that way.

Hoping that this may not be asking too much of you and trusting you may be pleased to have the little story released in such a way as I have suggested, I am

Very truly yours,

LAW:MB

Director

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FAHLEN-TEHAN BUILDING
SPRINGFIELD, OHIO

WM. W. KEIFER
HORACE S. KEIFER

March 25, 1938

Mr. Louis A. Warren, Director,
Lincoln National Life Foundation,
Fort Wayne, Ind.

Dear Sir:

Answering yours of the 22nd inst., I am handing you here-
with the original letter of Peter Smith to my father, J. Warren Keifer,
of July 17, 1860, a copy of which I sent you. I have concluded to
let you keep the letter, at least for the present. If I call for
it you will return it, but it seems to me that your organization is
a good place for such things and more likely preserved properly than
elsewhere. If you are making a photograph or photostat of it please
send me a copy.

The story of the interview with Lincoln is interesting to
me because it was told at a time before Lincoln was President and
before he was so famous a character. There have been so many Lincoln
stories worked up since he was so distinguished that there is often
suspicion as to their authenticity or correctness. This Lincoln
incident I had never heard of before and it is so characteristic that
it is worth while to preserve it.

Peter Smith was a cousin of my father's and as you will
note from his letter was an intelligent man, having had some education
for those times and had been a school teacher.

I would be glad to receive your "Lincoln Lore".

Kindly acknowledge receipt.

Very truly yours,



WWK/EH

March 28, 1938

Mr. William W. Keifer
Fahien-Tehan Building
Springfield, Ohio

My dear Mr. Keifer:

We are very happy indeed to have the loan of the very interesting letter which was written by Peter Smith to your father.

You will please find under separate cover a photostat copy of the letter which we will be glad to retain in our files as a negative in case you require other copies.

With your permission we would like very much to print a section with practically all of the letter in a subsequent issue of Lincoln Lore because we feel its contents are worthy of such a display.

One or two facts stated in your letter are very good and I wish to again thank you for making the facts available.

I thought of course that you were on our mailing list for Lincoln Lore, which I think you would be very glad to receive, and I take pleasure in enclosing along with the photostat as many back numbers as are now available, and we hope you may enjoy them.

Very truly yours,

LAW:EB

Director

LAW OFFICES
KEIFER & KEIFER
FAHLEN-TEHAN BUILDING
SPRINGFIELD, OHIO

WM. W. KEIFER
HORACE S. KEIFER

March 29, 1938

Mr. Louis A. Warren, Director,
The Lincoln National Life Foundation,
Fort Wayne, Ind.

Dear Sir:

I have yours of the 28th inst. I see no objection to your printing the letter of Peter Smith or such part of it as you think best in your Lincoln Lore.

I will be very glad to receive the Lincoln Lore regularly. I have seen copies of it before and I know I will be interested in them.

Yours very truly,



WTK/EH

June 16, 1938

Mr. Wm. W. Keifer
Fahien-Tehan Bldg.
Springfield, Ohio

My dear Mr. Keifer:

We will be pleased indeed to learn that the letter written to your father created quite a sensation at Vincennes yesterday where I read it before an assembled group at the dedication of the Lincoln statue.

I am taking occasion to enclose under separate cover a copy of the Vincennes Sun Commercial as I think you will be pleased to preserve it.

It was a pleasure to meet at the ceremony in Vincennes Mr. P. M. Smith a relative of Peter Smith who lives at Sumner, Illinois.

The Daughters of the American Revolution are very anxious to have a copy of the letter written to your father to place in the cornerstone of this beautiful monument. I assured them that I was quite confident you would allow me to have a copy of the letter made unless you would prefer to send one to them yourself.

I also advised Mr. P. M. Smith that I felt you would not object to my sending him a photostat copy of the interesting letter.

You will observe that my remarks with reference to the letter furnishes a very vital bit of evidence with reference to the crossing of the river by the Lincoln family at Vincennes and I thank you again for allowing us to preserve this valuable letter of Lincoln history.

Very truly yours,

LAW:PW
L.A. Warren

Director

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KEIFER & KEIFER
FAHLEN-TEHAN BUILDING
SPRINGFIELD, OHIO

WM. W. KEIFER
HORACE S. KEIFER

June 18, 1938

Dr. Louis A. Warren, Director,
Lincoln National Life Foundation,
Fort Wayne, Indiana

My dear Dr. Warren:

I thank you for yours of the 16th inst. in reference to the Peter Smith letter and I was very much interested in your having used it at Vincennes. I have also received a copy of the newspaper from a relative who lives in Vincennes.

I have no objection to your giving a copy of the letter to the Daughters of the American Revolution to be placed in the cornerstone, nor to your giving a photostat copy to Mr. P. M. Smith. You make the copies and send them.

I also would appreciate it very much if you would send a photostat copy of the letter to my brother, J. Warren Keifer, Jr., Bostwick, Nebr. He would be interested in getting it.

Also, I acknowledge receipt of yours of the 16th inst., returning the copy of the Lincoln letter to the Methodist ministers and accompanying correspondence which belong to Mr. George S. Dial, and thank you for your information and interest in the matter.

Yours very truly,

Wm. W. Keifer

WWK/EH

June 20, 1938

Mr. Wm. W. Keifer
Keifer & Keifer
Fahien-Tehan Bldg.
Springfield, Ohio

My dear Mr. Keifer:

The letter which your father received has aroused a great deal of interest and the newspaper has now offered to print a copy of the letter in facsimile which I think will allow a great many of your friends and relatives to have it in that form as soon as it is published and I will advise you when it appears.

We are pleased indeed to send a photostat copy of the letter.

We will be very glad to send a copy of the letter to J. Warren Keifer, Jr., Bostwick, Nebraska.

Very truly yours,

LAW:PW
L.A. Warren

Director

July 15, 1938

Mr. Wm. W. Keifer
Fahien -Tehan Building
Springfield, Ohio

My dear Mr. Keifer:

We saw an autograph of J. Warren Keifer advertised the other day in a catalogue and was able to secure it. I am sending you a photostat copy. It is merely an autographic note, as you will see, but we were anxious to have it in file with the letter written to Mr. Keifer by Peter Smith.

Very truly yours,

LAW:EB
Enc. (1)

Director

Grandview, Ind., April 11, 1935.

Mrs. Beulah Gray, editor of the Ottwell Star, copies from The Monitor the mention of the markers for the Lincoln Memorial Highway and then comments: "And the editor of this paper has her own views about the route the Lincoln family traveled in March of 1830, when they left Spencer county and traveled across the southern part of Indiana to Vincennes where they crossed the Wabash river into Illinois, and that route would not follow the markers which will probably be set along the route designated by the Leslie Commission of 1931. Abraham Lincoln, though only a boy, and his father, Thomas Lincoln, were too well versed in woodcraft and too familiar with the topography of the country to have followed that route in the spring of 1830. There was only one decent ford where they could have crossed the Patoka river at that season of the year and that ford was at Enlow's Mill, where the city of Jasper now stands. It was a ford which was thoroughly familiar to them too. But historians, Brother Baker, often have to stand aside and see things happen which are very contrary to documentary evidence that still exists."

Mrs. Gray is quite right in stating that many things are happening today which are contrary to all documentary and reasonable evidence, but it is a fine stunt to collect and preserve this documentary and reasonable evidence for the consideration of future historians. The editor of this paper would rather gather historical matter which he thinks is correct than to have a hand in the placing of any project where it does not rightfully belong.

Airview of the Wabash at Terre Haute, once "jammed with steam-boats, rafts and barges, loaded with whisky, flour and pork."

*Thurk,
Oct
1944*



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JOHN G. BIEL
ATTORNEY AND COUNSELOR AT LAW
301 STAR BUILDING
TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA
TELEPHONE CRAWFORD 5068

July 31, 1956

Lincoln Foundation
Lincoln National Life Insurance Company
Ft. Wayne, Indiana

Attention: Director

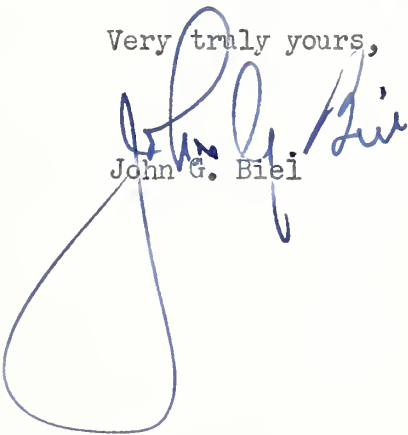
Dear Sir:

Has your Foundation determined, with any certainty, just where the Lincoln family crossed the Wabash River in its move from Indiana to Illinois? Of course, Vincennes claims that point -- and the monument has been erected there -- but there still seems to be a question.

I was in Bruceville recently and had occasion to visit the old Bruce home and talk with one of the present generation members of the family. This person is most insistant that the Lincoln family stopped at the old Bruce home -- which was then a Tavern -- and stayed there all night on their way to Illinois and that the family did not cross the river at Vincennes but at Russelville.

If you have made any study on this point I would appreciate a copy of your conclusions and references.

Very truly yours,


John G. Biel

JGB:er

August 1, 1956

Mr. John G. Biel
301 Star Building
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Mr. Biel:

We have your letter of July 31 and note with interest your question as to whether or not the Lincolns crossed the river at Vincennes in their migration to Illinois.

It has been the contention of the foundation over a long period of years that the crossing of the Wabash River was at Vincennes and I personally am of the opinion that the family crossed at that point. It seems logical that the family would travel through this town on their way to Illinois and I believe that a pretty good case could be made in proving that point.

Recently I have not made any careful study of the Vincennes claims but I feel sure that the Russelville claims could not be substantiated.

Yours Sincerely,

Director

RCMcMurtry/ch

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JOHN G. BIEL
ATTORNEY AND COUNSELOR AT LAW
301 STAR BUILDING
TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA
TELEPHONE CRAWFORD 5068

August 27, 1956

Dr. R. Gerald McMurtry, Director
The Lincoln National Life Foundation
Fort Wayne, Indiana

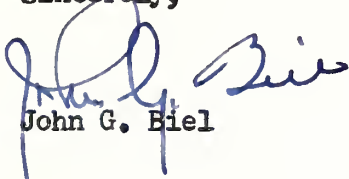
Dear Mr. McMurtry:

Thanks for your letter of August 1st.

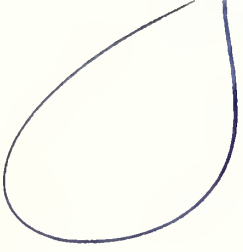
Enclosed is a copy of an article which will appear
shortly in a weekly column which I write for the Terre Haute
Star. I thought you might be interested in it.

I will appreciate your comments.

Sincerely,


John G. Biel

JGB:er
Encl.



There is still quite an argument as to just where the Lincoln family crossed the Wabash River in their move from Indiana to Illinois back in 1830. There are remnants of the old Bruce family, now living in Bruceville, Indiana, who "swear" that the family crossed the River at Russellville. Charles M. Thompson, of the University of Illinois who, with his Committee, made an investigation for the Board of Trustees of the Illinois State Historical Library at the request of the Illinois General Assembly, in 1911, concludes that the Lincoln family crossed the River at Vincennes. Mr. R. Gerald McMurtry, the new Director of the Lincoln National Life Foundation, says that "it has been the contention of the Foundation over a long period of years that the crossing of the Wabash was at Vincennes". Still, a real controversy exists - and perhaps always will.

Mrs. Harriet Chapman was a member of the Lincoln party at the time this trip was made. She said that the crossing of the Wabash was not made at Vincennes. Mrs. Chapman was a daughter of Dennis Hanks, and a granddaughter of Sarah Bush Lincoln. Even the close relatives of Abraham Lincoln always differed as to just how many people were with the Lincoln family when it made the move from Indiana to Illinois. There seems to have been at least thirteen: Thomas Lincoln, his wife Sarah, his son Abraham and step-son John D. Johnson; Squire Hall, his wife Matilda and their son John; Dennis Hanks, his wife Elizabeth, and their four children - Harriet (Mrs. Chapman), John, Sarah Jane (Mrs. Dowling) and Nancy. This group left Gentryville, in Spencer County, Indiana about March 1st, 1830.

The Illinois State Historical Library report, published in 1915, states that "an examination of printed material early in the investigation led to the belief that they passed through Vincennes, Indiana, and crossed the

Wabash River into Illinois at or near that city; and subsequent investigation has confirmed that belief. Evidence to the contrary is scant and self-contradictory".

In an affidavit made by James Wade Emison to the Committee making the investigation of the "Lincoln Way", he says that his grandfather, William W. C. Emison talked to Mr. Lincoln when the family was on its way into Illinois and that Mr. Lincoln told him "they had come around by way of Bruceville, which was slightly out of their way in order to avoid driving through ... a road of heavy sand which stretched for five or six miles on the road north out of Vincennes and that "when they reached the town of Bruceville, they proposed to turn west on the Bruceville and Russellville highway and cross the Wabash River from the State of Indiana to the State of Illinois, at the Russellville Ford". In an affidavit made by William O. Roach, he states that William W. C. Emison had told him the same thing. William Taylor made an affidavit that his mother had always told him that the Lincoln family came from Vincennes and passed through Bruceville, crossing the River at the Russellville Ford. Mrs. Chapman - the former Harriet Hanks who was a member of the Lincoln party and was only five or six years old at the time - made an affidavit that "the party was at Vincennes, Indiana and that the party, in leaving Vincennes, went by land, camped the first night out near a grist mill; that the party crossed the Wabash River the next day (the second after leaving Vincennes)".

This all would seem to settle the question but it did not.

Abraham Lincoln is supposed to have told Colonel Augustus H. Chapman, husband of Harriet Hanks, that the party crossed the Wabash River into Illinois at Vincennes and went westward to Lawrenceville.

The Committee for the Historical Library reconciles these two seemingly conflicting versions rather weakly. The Committee report says: "The elder Mr. Amison knew only the intentions of the travellers. He has left no record of having definite information about the crossing of the river and there is no evidence to show that the party did not return to Vincennes and cross the river there." Well!! Neither is there any record that they did!! This negative argument seems quite a little bit forced. The Committee then argues itself into its ultimate conclusion by saying "it is conceivable that the Lincoln's first went northward from Vincennes, intending to cross the river above but that for some reason they turned back and crossed at Vincennes. Mrs. Chapman's uncertainty about the crossing (whether it was by ferry or fording the river) would indicate there was some derangement of plans". This seems very weak reasoning also. Mrs. Chapman's "uncertainty" could also be just as well attributed to her tender age at the time of the trip (five or six years old) and her reliance for her remembrances on family tradition. It seems inconceivable - although this is exactly what the Committee believes is conceivable - that the Lincoln party of at least thirteen people with their three heavy wagons pulled by awkward oxen would travel north out of Vincennes on five or six miles of heavy sand and then "for some reason" turn back and go the same distance all over again, when they could very easily have crossed the river at Russellville where they had arrived at the exact time the Committee argues "for some reason they turned back".

After all, an incidence in history such as this - when there is no exact, specific record attesting to its details - must be examined and explored logically and intelligently - not emotionally. We must not nurture

the impression of history which George Bernard Shaw puts into the mouth of a character in his play, THE DEVIL'S DISCIPLE:

"What will history say?" asks Major Swindon of General Burgoyne
"just before they surrendered to the despised colonials at
"Saratoga.

"History, sir, will tell lies, as usual," replied Burgoyne."

This question of just where the Lincoln family crossed the Wabash River must be explored and considered further. It must be given weight, in this further consideration, that this crossing occurred in the spring of the year which is the time of the usual and great flooding of the river; it must be given weight that the great low-lands west of Vincennes to Lawrenceville were nothing but flooded river-bottom lands; it must be given weight that the road from Lawrenceville to the north goes through what was called - even by the early settlers of that time - "The Purgatories", because they were so impassable; it must be given weight that the road around through Bruceville and across west to Russellville was on high land; it must be given weight that the party's wagons were heavy and the oxen and/or oxen and horses were slow and clumsy and, what must be given very special weight, is the fact that the only source of the statement of Abraham Lincoln that the crossing was at Vincennes was obtained from Jesse W. Weik who, at first says "I do not recall that the question of the route of travel ever came up in our talks ...", but who, nine months later, writes jubilantly, that "I have just found what I have for lo, these many months been hunting ... the original manuscript of an interview ... giving the route of the Lincoln family ... ". Many an other consideration must enter in and also be given its due weight before any definite conclusion should be drawn.

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It has been said that "historical analysis, to serve its purpose of providing information for present judgment, must be dispassionate and wholly fair. Historical research which distorts precedent to favor a preconception is cheating ... One way to achieve fairness is to present the facts - as nearly as anything so elusive as that well-known mirage the 'historical fact' can be presented - and let the facts speak for themselves ... ".

Letting "the facts speak for themselves" certainly does not encompass such a far-fetched conclusion that since there is no evidence that they did not turn back to Vincennes, they must have done so. It could just as well be argued on this basis that since there is no evidence that they did not continue on up the road to Terre Haute to cross the river, they must have done so.

Let there be further investigation!

August 29, 1956

Mr. John G. Biel
301 Star Building
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Mr. Biel:

I have read with interest the article which you enclosed with your letter of August 27. I note with interest that this article will appear shortly in a weekly column which you write for the Terre Haute Star.

I think that you have approached your subject very objectively and I think that your article will command considerable interest and speculation.

Likely it will lead to further research and you may be instrumental in solving this problem once new information is available.

I am very glad to have your article to place in our files.

Yours sincerely,

RCM:js

Director

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Lincoln Lane
386

JOHN G. BIEL
ATTORNEY AND COUNSELOR AT LAW
301 STAR BUILDING
TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA
TELEPHONE CRAWFORD 5068

October 29, 1956

Dr. R. Gerald McMurtry
The Lincoln National Life Foundation
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Mr. McMurtry:

Thanks for your letter of the 26th.

The "Peter Smith" letter is most interesting but I would not say it was conclusive.

I find -- in doing my historical research -- I cannot divorce my legal training and my psychology from my study of historical items. I am always analyzing matters from a "legal" point of view.

Looking then at this "Smith" letter: -- I am sorry -- for this purpose -- it has a political tinge. Smith is very prone to exaggeration. Note his statement about the State Convention that he "never in life saw congregated together so many noble intelligent looking men". He is talking about a POLITICAL CONVENTION!! People haven't changed so much over the years. Then again, his statement about the "noblest Roman of them all"; this is complementary but quite exaggerated.

Lincoln's story to Smith was after an introduction to -- I presume -- a delegate to the Convention. Lincoln was "politically minded" and, of course, wished to make a good impression on a possible supporter. It would have been inconceivable for Lincoln to have told him "No we didn't go through your town". He possibly wanted to flatter Smith and did so -- definitely. Even at that, Lincoln says the story is true "in part". Of course he implies the "part" was that he had shoes on instead of being barefoot -- but the "part" could have been the same circumstances but a different town.

Smith's use of phrases such as "man of the people"; "easy of access to the humblest of his fellow-citizens"; "patient toil and perseverance"; "Humblest walks of life"; "our great Republic"; "enthusiastic shouts and joyful demonstrations"; "friends of freedom"; "over 1,000 per cent gain"; etc., etc., all tend to excess of exaggeration and tend to show he is quoting and "over-stressing" in order to make an impression. It is quite a "feather" in Smith's cap to be able to tell Keifer that Lincoln came through his town -- Lawrenceville. Then, too, Smith is trying to sell Keifer some land!!!

I could not say -- intelligently -- that this letter really solved the question. It is entitled to some weight but there are so many other circumstances, facts, and suppositions which carry much more weight and which would require pretty definite contrary facts to overcome them. This one letter alone is not sufficient for that purpose.

JOHN G. BIEL

SHEET NO. 2

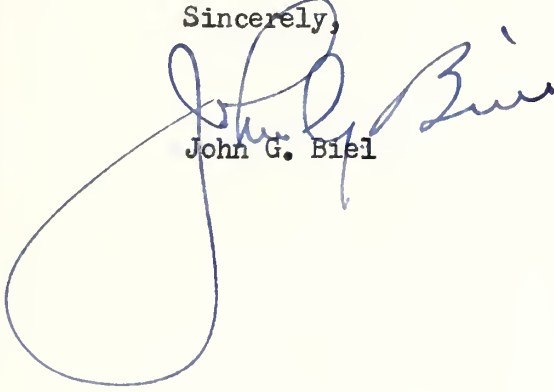
DATE October 29, 1956

LETTER TO Mr. Gerald McMurtry

If the re-examination of this question could be given sufficient publicity and be sponsored by a well-established, reputable entity, I think some additional evidence would be forthcoming.

The whereabouts of that Cabin certainly is a mystery. Where was it seen last? Has any special investigation been made about it?

Sincerely,


John G. Biel

JGB:er

November 2, 1956

Mr. John G. Biel
Attorney & Counselor at Law
301 Star Building
Terre Haute, Indiana

Dear Mr. Biel:

I have read with a great deal of interest your comments concerning the Peter Smith letter.

While I agree with you that it is not conclusive, it certainly is interesting evidence. As a lawyer I am sure that you would consider it important evidence if you were presenting a case before the court.

With this letter I am enclosing a photostat of Lincoln Lore No. 386. This bulletin will give you some additional information concerning the Lincoln Log Cabin near Charleston, Illinois.

Sincerely,

RCM/JA
Enc.

Director

